



Orville John Alitz

November 28, 1932 - February 28, 2019

Orville John Alitz (86), formerly of Marion, Iowa, died Thursday, February 28, 2019. He had been struggling with Parkinson's disease -- now he's free.

A Memorial Service will be held at 12:30 p.m., Thursday, March 14, 2019, at Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, Marion, conducted by Pastor Dennis Johnson. The family will greet friends one hour prior to service at the church on Thursday. Arrangements by Murdoch Funeral Home & Cremation Service, Marion.

Orville was born and raised in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. During his first year in college he enlisted in the Air Force and was stationed primarily in Germany during the early days of the cold war and the Berlin wall. During that time he participated in several missions releasing chaff (metal strips) over Germany to confuse Russian radar. When his tour was completed, he returned to Eau Claire to continue his studies in electrical engineering. During that time he met his future wife Jo. They moved to Madison, Wisconsin to complete his studies.

After completing his engineering degree, Orville was hired by Collins Radio in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Early in his career he was assigned to work on the communications radios for the Apollo and Gemini projects. After the completion of Gemini project he was allowed to pursue his own ideas. Recalling the interaction of radar with the chaff, he developed analysis of the doppler effect in weather radar to determine motion and turbulence in rain. Along with David Moos he developed the phase-array antenna. Working closely with NOAA, this became the basis of our modern color radar; now common in planes and television stations.

He had a love of the outdoors and went on many camping trips with his family starting out with tenting trips to the Rockies and progressing to traveling much of the U.S. and parts of Canada in RVs with extended family. His love of the outdoors tied in with his involvement with the Boy Scouts of America. Growing up he was a member of a local troop in Eau Claire. When completing his studies in Madison he was an Assistant Scoutmaster. When

his son grew old enough to join Scouts, he became the Scoutmaster of the local troop; and served for several years. He was proud of the 12 boys he shepherded through the program to Eagle Scout.

He is survived by his wife, Jo; brother, Robert and his wife Diana; son, David and his wife Dawn, and their daughters, Birgit and Tabitha; son-in-law, Joe Clause and his children, Marissa, Lauren, and Jordan; four great-grandchildren; and nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, Orville R. and Alice S. (Amdahl) Alitz; sister, Beatrice A. Mittelstadt; sister, Dolores M. (who died in infancy); and daughter, Elizabeth A. Clause.

Events

MAR **Visitation** 11:30AM - 12:30PM

14

Lutheran Church of the Resurrection
Marion, IA, US

MAR **Memorial Service** 12:30PM

14

Lutheran Church of the Resurrection
Marion, IA, US

Comments



“ Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Orville John Alitz.



March 12 at 12:18 PM



“ Jo and Family...

My deceased husband Ted and I lived next door to Jo and Orv (and Orv's electric lawn mower) for forty years. No one could have had nicer neighbors. Ted always said, "Orv was the 'best' neighbor." Orv was such a nice, gentle and kind person. I will miss him. Blessings to you Jo and David and Family. Sandy Ochs

Sandra L Ochs - March 11 at 10:38 AM



“ From: Close Family in Munich, Germany purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Orville John Alitz.



From: Close Family in Munich, Germany - March 02 at 06:02 AM